

Message Text

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SUBJ: SPINY LOBSTER NEGOTIATION - JOINT PRESS RELEASE

REF: NASSAU 1306

1. THE FOLLOWING REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR SEYMOUR WEISS, SHOULD BE ADDED TO REFTEL AS ONE OF THE ATTACHMENTS TO THE JOINT PRESS RELEASE:

QUOTE OPENING REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR SEYMOUR WEISS - U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE BAHAMAS SPINY LOBSTER NEGOTIATION - AUGUST 13, 1975

MR. MINISTER,
ON BEHALF OF MY COLLEAGUES AND MYSELF LET ME SAY THAT WE ARE VERY PLEASED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH YOU FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXPLORING AN AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH UNITED STATES BASED FISHERMEN MAY BE PERMITTED TO CONTINUE TO FISH FOR LOBSTER ON THE BAHAMIAN CONTINENTAL SHELF.

WE ARE, OF COURSE, FAMILIAR WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE BAHAMAS
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FISHING ACT OF 1969 AS AMENDED AND THE PROVISION THAT IT MAKES

FOR ENTERING INTO AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER NATIONS TO PERMIT SUCH FISHING. WHILE I WOULD NOT IN ANY SENSE WISH TO UNDERESTIMATE THE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WHICH MAY PRESENT THEMSELVES IN WORKING OUT A DETAILED ARRANGEMENT, NEVERTHELESS, AS YOU WELL KNOW FROM OUR MANY PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS, I REMAIN CONVINCED THAT AN AGREEMENT CONSISTENT WITH THE INTERESTS OF BOTH NATIONS CAN BE DEVELOPED.

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF MY GOVERNMENT, OUR INTEREST IS SELF-APPARENT AND WE HAVE MADE NO PRETENSE ABOUT IT. WE HAVE A LARGE AND ACTIVE FISHING INDUSTRY LARGELY BASED IN FLORIDA WHICH FOR MANY YEARS HAS DEPENDED UPON ACCESS TO LOBSTERS IN THESE WATERS. TO PUT IT IN HUMANITARIAN TERMS LARGE NUMBERS OF FISHERMEN WHO HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO OTHER MEANS FOR SUPPORTING THEIR FAMILIES ARE PRESENTLY IDLED. THIS IS NOT ONLY A SERIOUS MATTER BUT FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW ONE REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION. IN APPROACHING THIS PROBLEM AND IN ATTEMPTING TO MEET OUR OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT WE DO NOT DO SO FROM A NARROW POINT OF VIEW. TO THE CONTRARY IN SOLVING OUR PROBLEM WE HOPE TO CONSIDER WITH YOU APPROACHES WHICH YOU WILL FIND CONSISTENT WITH ADVANCING YOUR OWN INTERESTS. INDEED WE RECOGNIZE THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF A MANIFEST COMMONALITY OF PURPOSE AGREEMENT IS UNLIKELY.

WITHOUT BEING PRESUMPTUOUS, WE HOPE THAT OUR DISCUSSIONS CAN DEMONSTRATE IT IS AT LEAST EQUALLY IN YOUR COUNTRY'S INTEREST TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT OF THE SORT I HAVE BEEN ALLUDING TO. FOR EXAMPLE, YOU ARE ANXIOUS THAT YOUR LOBSTER RESOURCE NOT BE UTILIZED IN SUCH A MANNER SO THAT ITS VIABILITY AS A RESOURCE OVER THE INDEFINITE FUTURE IS LOST TO THE BAHAMAS. SECONDLY, AND NOT UNRELATED TO THE PREVIOUS POINT, YOU PRESUMABLY WISH TO GAIN ECONOMIC BENEFIT FROM THE EXPLOITATION OF THAT RESOURCE.

WITH REGARD TO BOTH THE AFOREMENTIONED POINTS WE BELIEVE THAT AN AGREEMENT CAN AND SHOULD MEET YOUR ASPIRATIONS. MOREOVER, WE BELIEVE THAT BOTH POINTS CAN BE ACCOMMODATED WITHIN AN AGREEMENT WHICH AT THE SAME TIME DOES PERMIT OUR FISHERMEN TO CONTINUE TO PURSUE THEIR LIVELIHOODS.

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WHILE I HAVE INDICATED THAT IN MY VIEW EACH OF THE GOVERNMENTS HAVE OBJECTIVES WHICH ARE MUTUALLY CONSISTENT I RECOGNISE FULL WELL THAT THAT CONCLUSION REMAINS TO BE DEMONSTRATED BY REFERENCE TO THE SPECIFICS OF ANY PROPOSAL WHICH MAY BE AGREED UPON. THAT IS, OF COURSE, WHAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS IN THESE MEETINGS. I WOULD LIKE TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT IN ADDITION TO THE INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL INTERESTS WHICH EACH OF US SHARE IN ACHIEVING AN AGREEMENT, I THINK THAT THERE IS ALSO A COMPOSITE

COMMON INTEREST WHICH IN A SENSE SUPERIMPOSES ITSELF UPON EACH OF OUR INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS AS THESE INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS RELATE SOLELY TO THE FISHERY ISSUE. OUR COUNTRIES HAVE HAD AND CONTINUE TO HAVE A VERY CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP. IT IS A RELATIONSHIP FROM WHICH BOTH NATIONS HAVE BENEFITTED. IT IS A RELATIONSHIP WHICH I HAVE NO DOUBT WHATSOEVER BOTH NATIONS WISH TO FOSTER AND INDEED OVER TIME EVEN IMPROVE UPON. AN AGREEMENT WHICH ACCOMMODATES OUR MUTUAL NATIONAL INTERESTS IS THE ONLY OUTCOME OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WHICH WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE POSITIVE CHARACTER OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

THUS IT IS THESE CONSIDERATIONS:

-- THE FACT THAT AN AGREEMENT CAN AND SHOULD MEET IMPORTANT INTERESTS OF BOTH PARTIES AND MY EARNEST BELIEF THAT AN AGREEMENT MEETING SUCH A PRESCRIPTION CAN BE DEvised AND

-- THE FACT THAT AN AGREEMENT ON THIS ISSUE WHICH IS MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES IS IMPORTANT TO THE TOTALITY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, THAT I BASE MY CONFIDENCE ON OUR ABILITY TO NEGOTIATE SUCH AN AGREEMENT.

WITH THESE THOUGHTS IN MIND, MR. MINISTER, MY GOVERNMENT HAS MADE AVAILABLE THE VERY BEST EXPERTS THAT IT HAS IN FISHERIES MATTERS. IN PARTICULAR, MR. DAVID WALLACE OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE IS A MAN OF OUTSTANDING CREDENTIALS IN FISHERY PROBLEMS HAVING HAD MANY YEARS IN DEALING WITH THOSE PROBLEMS ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOU WILL FIND MR. WALLACE NOT JUST EXPERT IN THE DETAILS OF THE FISHERY PROBLEM BUT A SYMPATHETIC AND INTELLIGENT MAN EARNESTLY DESIROUS OF FINDING THE EQUITABLE SOLUTION TO WHICH

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I HAVE REFERRED. HE IS, MOREOVER, SUPPORTED BY A NUMBER OF ADVISORS WHOM WE HOPE CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE AS THESE DISCUSSIONS PROGRESS. I BELIEVE IT IS A TESTIMONY AS TO THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTRIBUTE TO THESE DISCUSSIONS THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS ASSEMBLED UNDER MR. WALLACE'S LEADERSHIP SUCH AN EMINENTLY QUALIFIED TEAM.

MR. MINISTER, I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT I MYSELF, MR. WALLACE, AND OUR ENTIRE TEAM APPROACH THESE DISCUSSIONS WITH AN OPEN MIND, DEDICATED SOLELY TO ACHIEVING AN EQUITABLE AGREEMENT WHICH CAN FORM STILL ANOTHER LINK IN THE CHAIN OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WHICH BINDS OUR TWO NATIONS. FINALLY, I ALSO WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DEVOTE SUCH TIME AS NECESSARY AND, TO QUOTE YOUR PRIME MINISTER'S EARLIER COMMENT TO ME, TO CONDUCT AS INTENSE AND CONCENTRATED NEGOTIATION AS

NECESSARY WITH A VIEW TO OBTAINING AS RAPID AND SUCCESSFUL A
CONCLUSION TO THESE NEGOTIATIONS AS IS FEASIBLE.

WE ARE, MR. MINISTER, AT YOUR DISPOSAL. UNQUOTE
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